



BRITANNICA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL, SHANGHAI

CRITICAL INCIDENT POLICY

Updated August 2024

Monitoring and Review

This policy is to be reviewed annually, though any deficiencies or weaknesses in health and safety arrangements will be remedied without delay.

This policy will be reviewed by the Principal.

This policy will be approved by the Board/ Orbital Education.

Date when policy was last approved: August 2024

Date when next review is due: August 2025

For Head Office advice contact:

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Definition

A critical incident is defined as a sudden, unexpected and/or tragic event or sequence of events affecting students, personnel or property, requiring immediate responsive action which overwhelms the school's normal coping mechanism. It may relate directly to the safety of the school community or may involve an incident beyond the school premises.

A critical incident may occur during the school day, before or after school hours, during school holidays or on a school trip.

Examples of a critical incident might be:

- the death of a member of the school community, through sudden death, accident, suicide or terminal illness
- a serious accident or tragedy in the school community
- a positive case of COVID-19
- a traffic accident involving a student or staff member
- a school fire, flood or an explosion in the laboratory
- the disappearance of a member of the school community
- a physical attack on a staff member or student
- an illness within the school or the local community
- severe weather requiring closure of the school
- intrusion into the school
- civil disturbances

Britannica International School, Shanghai recognises that occurrences which cannot be foreseen or considered may arise. Therefore, there cannot be a separate written plan to cover every possible emergency. Core staff training includes regular discussions of the steps to be taken in the more common emergencies, including a deliberate act of violence, fire, destruction, serious vandalism or public health threats.

Aims

- to provide support to all students and staff affected by the incident
- to minimise educational and administrative disruption within school
- to resume the normal running of the school in the shortest possible time
- to maintain the normal running of the school

Objectives

- to ensure that prompt and proportionate action is taken
- to ensure the welfare of all members of the school community
- to ensure that the school responds sensitively, consistently and effectively
- to have in place a Critical Incident Management Team, the membership of which is known to all relevant parties

- to have in place a Critical Incident Management Plan, the details of which are familiar to all relevant parties

Receiving the Alert

The alert may come from:

- staff members
- parents and/or students
- the police
- the media
- members of the public

Role of Person Who Receives the Alert

The person who receives the alert should be prepared to ask for as much information as possible including:

- What has happened?
- Have the emergency services been informed/are they attending?
- Exact location and any access problems if the person is not on site
- Casualties
- Actions taken so far
- Name/contact at the site if the person is not on site
- What assistance is needed?

GUIDELINES FOR MANAGING A CRITICAL INCIDENT

- The Principal/ Vice Principal shall take charge of the school's response.
- In the case of the Principal/ Vice Principal being unavailable, the members of the Critical Incident Management Team (CIMT) shall take charge.
- The Principal's office shall be the central point of contact.
- The CIMT shall assess immediate needs.
- The CIMT shall contact relatives of those directly involved if required.
- A short simple statement of facts shall be prepared by the Principal (this should if practicable be reviewed with the Regional Head of Schools (RHoS)/ Governance Team.
- If applicable, all contacts from the media shall be dealt with by the Principal in consultation with the RHoS / Governance Team.
- Secretarial staff taking incoming calls shall use a statement agreed by the CIMT.
- When necessary, all staff members shall be informed and shall be guided in relation to informing students.
- Support shall be offered to those affected.
- There shall be an evaluation of the way in which the incident was managed.

Policy Review

The Principal, the CIMT and Regional Head of Schools (on behalf of the Board) will undertake a bi-annual review of the school's Critical Incident Policy and Procedures though any deficiencies or weaknesses in critical incident arrangements will be remedied without delay.

This policy will be approved by the Director/ Principal and Board.